

DOE Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy visits INL

Dennis Spurgeon, newly confirmed DOE assistant secretary for Nuclear Energy, is visiting Idaho National Laboratory this week.

Spurgeon said he sees the resurgence in interest in nuclear energy as an historic opportunity to fulfill the promise of nuclear power.

And, he reminded Idaho National Laboratory employees that INL is the lead lab in this resurgence.

In a meeting with INL employees Monday morning, he said the Bush Administration, the U.S. Congress and a growing percentage of the country's citizens are once again behind commercial nuclear power.

Spurgeon is visiting INL for two days, just a month after his confirmation as assistant secretary.

He said the number one priority for the resurgence of nuclear power production is "to get more plants in this country. We need (commercial) orders for new plants and concrete to be poured." This will help build the momentum to keep the nuclear renaissance going into the future.

Also, "We have to remove the roadblocks. These are dealing with nuclear waste and proliferation issues," he said.

He said the proposed Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) will help address these issues and lay the foundation for large-scale development of peaceful nuclear power production around the world. This encouragement will come from the 2005 Energy Policy (that, in part, offers loan guarantees to the first group of commercial plants built) and through a regulatory assurance process.

Finally, he said the government needs to help encourage and support the growth of college nuclear engineering curricula that will produce the next generation of engineers.

Prior to his appointment as assistant secretary, Spurgeon was involved in a variety of endeavors related to nuclear power.

He served as executive vice president and chief operating officer of the United States Enrichment Corporation (USEC). Before joining USEC, he served as a principal owner and CEO of Swift Group LLC, an international leader in shipbuilding for commercial and military markets. His earlier career included executive leadership positions at UNC Resources (formerly United Nuclear Corporation) where, as chief operating officer, some of his management responsibilities included the manufacture of automated machine tools, operation of a uranium recovery facility, the manufacturing of reactor cores for the U.S. Navy and operation of the dual purpose 'N' reactor.

He previously held posts in the Ford Administration, including an assignment as assistant director for fuel cycle in the U.S. Energy Research and Development Administration and as a member of the White House Task Force that developed President Ford's nuclear policy. He also worked for the General Atomic Company, where he assisted in the development of nuclear reactor plants for electric power generation.

During a distinguished military career with the United States Navy, Spurgeon served aboard two submarines, was a ship superintendent in a naval shipyard and was assigned on loan to the US Atomic Energy Commission as technical assistant to Commissioner 'Tommy' Thompson and later Chairman Glenn Seaborg. He ultimately achieved the rank of captain, USNR. Spurgeon holds a master's degree in nuclear engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a bachelor's degree with distinction from the U.S. Naval Academy.

General Contact:

Communications,

[Feature Archive](#)



**DOE Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy
Dennis Spurgeon addresses INL employees
about the future of nuclear energy. (INL photo)**